



DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

INFORMATION SERVICE

FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

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MANY WILDLIFE REFUGES OPENED TO SPORTS FISHERMEN, TOURISTS

Many of the 271 national wildlife refuges throughout the United States have been opened to sports fishermen and tourists, the Fish and Wildlife Service reported to Secretary of the Interior Harold L. Ickes today.

"When fishing, photography, hiking, or other tourist activities do not interfere with the primary purpose for which a refuge was established--the building up of wildlife populations--then sportsmen and others are encouraged to visit the area," said A. C. Elmer, assistant chief of the Service's Division of Wildlife Refuges.

On many of the refuges, fishing is one of the principal tourist attractions in summer. An estimated 2,500 fishermen, for example, cast their lines in the six lakes of the Wichita Mountains National Wildlife Refuge in Cache, Okla., on opening day.

Some refuges are so popular among sportsmen that commercial camps have been established near the refuge boundaries to accommodate transient Isaak Waltonians.

Before planning to visit a refuge, however, it is well to make local inquiries if one wishes to do any fishing, Service officials said.

Examples of good fishing areas are the following:

Upper Mississippi River Wildlife and Fish Refuge, a 286-mile-long area from Wabasha, Minn., to Rock Island, Ill.; Chautauqua National Wildlife Refuge, in Mason County, Ill., a 4,000-acre lake on the Illinois River bottoms; Mattamuskeet National Wildlife Refuge, in New Holland, N. C., which has a 50,000-acre lake.

Okefenokee National Wildlife Refuge, near Waycross, Ga., Fort Peck Game Range, which is in five Montana Counties, the Havasu Lake National Wildlife Refuge, on the Colorado River in Arizona and California; White River National Wildlife Refuge, near St. Charles, Ark.; and the Big Lake National Wildlife Refuge, near Manila, Ark.

Federal licenses or permits are usually not necessary to fish on the refuges opened to sportsmen. Fishermen must have State licenses, however, and are bound by State fishing regulations.

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